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NSC FOR PASCUAL, DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ELA AND DRL/NESCA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/06/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: RIOT POLICE SURROUND VIGIL ON SECOND ANNIVERSARY
OF AYMAN NOUR'S DETENTION

Classified By: Minister-Counselor for Economic and Political Affairs

¶1. (SBU) On December 5, we attended a candle-light vigil at the Ghad party's central Cairo headquarters, marking two years since former Ghad party leader and presidential candidate Ayman Nour was imprisoned. (Note: Nour was remanded to temporary custody on December 5, 2005, and officially sentenced and imprisoned on December 24, 2005.) Several dozen Ghad party activists, including Gameela Ismail (Nour's wife) were temporarily barred from entering the building housing the Ghad party office by 150-200 police in full riot gear. We observed the hour-and-a-half long standoff between the activists and police, with a cordon of police blocking the building's entrance with their bodies and an iron bar pushed against the door. Ghad party members inside the building, together with those outside blocked by the police, chanted slogans such as "Down with Mubarak!" and "Freedom for Ayman Nour, freedom for the Egyptian people!" Police eventually allowed the activists into the building, but were physically rough in their jostling of demonstrators.

¶2. (C) Ismail and former Ghad party president Ehab al Khouly both noted to poloff their appreciation of our attendance, and their frustration at the government's heavy-handed blocking of the vigil.
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